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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY Hungary

SUBJECT Dibasol, a Russian Medicament

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1. The development of this drug arose out of the need to find a substitute for papaverine, which was gained from imported Turkish poppy seed. Papaverine had hitherto proved the best blood-vessel dilatation means, and Soviet experts sought to find out which component in the papaverine was responsible for this action. They were able to credit this dilatory action to some chemicals in the papaverine molecule. The chemicals which make up this drug have been named dibasol.

2. Experiments on animals carried out with dibasol proved to be very successful. Reduction of blood pressure could be achieved without any side effects. These results were reported in 1949 to the Soviet Health Ministry, as a consequence of which Professor Kravkovij (or Krovakovij) of the Verkuta Health Research Center and the Leningrad Medical Research Institute carried on experiments on human beings. In 1949 many political prisoners were collected in special centers, especially those suffering from blood-pressure ailments.

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3. Professor Kravkovij's experiments consisted of taking a heart from a just deceased person and attaching to the blood vessels of the heart tubes through which a synthetic liquid was flowing. By measuring the quantity of liquid the heart was able to pump before and after the addition of dibasol the dilatory effect of dibasol could be established. Dibasol was also proved to remove heart pains, headaches resulting from heart troubles, and so on.

4. Dibasol was first introduced into Soviet clinics in 1951, and its large-scale production was ordered by the Health Ministry in 1952.

5. In Hungarian hospitals it was first seen in 1952, and in 1953 the Soviet Union began exports of small quantities to Rumania and Albania.

6. [redacted] the same medicament is now also applied in the case of paralysis, when the medulla oblongata is affected. It stimulates the nervous system, and has proved to be helpful in cases of paralysis facialis. Experiments in the cure of poliomyelitis have also been made recently.

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